

Grant Progress Narrative Report - Denali Commission Grant #01317-00

Overall project is on budget, on-schedule and we have not encountered any difficulties or impediments that could delay the completion of the grant.

Initial CWG board meeting to discuss Denali Commission Capacity Building grant took place in October 2010 in Bethel, AK. Present were all CWG board members and additional members from each CWG Utility's Board of Directors, AEA project manager Rich Stromberg and acting director Mike Harper, all employees of IES and Andrew Crow of ISER. Mr. Crow from University of Alaska, Small business Development proposed assistance in preparing a collaborative business plan, and offered examples of existing models for CWG to follow in the development of a shared services rural utility collaborative.

Further meetings between members of ISER, Foraker Group and ANTHC ARUC program managers and IES on behalf of CWG took place in October, November, and December 2010. Based on these meeting an outline and then detailed scope of work was developed.

John Spriggs of ANTHC ARUC program was particularly helpful in providing a roadmap based on their work. Ed Lohr and Mike Black of ANTHC proposed investigating ways of collaborative ways of assisting both water and sewer and electrical utility operations, on a regional level.

The Tribal Energy program at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory was contacted for capacity building guidance, and proposed \$25,000 for matching funds in 2011 to assist with CWG capacity building efforts. Mike Walsh of the Foraker Group was contacted to provide guidance and to understand what assistance they could provide.

IES has developed the scope of work and cost element sheets, this includes descriptions of study elements, information to be collected, as well as cost format sheets for determining more accurate operating costs. The most important element of work is to understand the cost structures of the individual utilities and make a determination of standard comparisons between utilities.

Contractor solicitation is under way. Detailed costing work to be in place mid February, comparative cost studies are anticipated to be completed by the end of March. This will then be followed by utility board meetings and long-term planning. Enthusiasm for the possibilities presented by the outcomes of this project were expressed by those in attendance.

Local community support received from contacts within each village. These contacts from CWG will be responsible for providing contractors with all the necessary information to complete the grant activities and will be compensated for their time. Rates of pay and personnel information collected from all support staff.

No payments made or reimbursement for this grant has been requested for 4th quarter, 2010 report.